

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3218
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BRASILIA 6698

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, BR, AR, PA
SUBJ: PRESS PRINTS EXCHANGE OF ARGENTINE/BRAZILIAN DIPLOMATIC
NOTES

REF: BRASILIA 6562

1. SUMMARY. BRAZILIAN-ARGENTINE EXCHANGE OF NOTES PUBLISHED
BY ESTADO AUGUST 5 (REFTEL) REVIEWED RECENT EFFORTS BY TWO
GOVERNMENTS TO SOLVE THEIR DISPUTE OVER PARANA RIVER PROJECTS
AND PLATE BASIN NAVIGATION. NOTES MAKE CLEAR THAT BOTH SIDES
HAVE FOR THE MOMENT AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO TRILATERAL
DIALOGUE (INVOLVING PARAGUAY) ON PURELY TECHNICAL ISSUES
RELATED TO PROJECTS AND NAVIGATION. GOB HAS DENIED IT
LEAKED NOTES, BUT INDICATED PUBLICATION DID NOT THREATEN A
CONTINUED DIALOGUE. EMFA CHIEF POTYGUARA ADMITTED TO
PRESS THAT BILATERAL EXCHANGES EVIDENCED IN NOTES HAVE BEEN
COMPLEMENTED BY A PARALLEL DIALOGUE BETWEEN ARMED FORCES CHIEFS
OF BOTH COUNTRIES WHO MET DURING JULY BOTH IN BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA.
END SUMMARY.
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2. BRAZILIAN-ARGENTINE EXCHANGE OF NOTES PUBLISHED IN ESTADO
AUGUST 5 (REFTEL WAS MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENT IN
CHAIN OF EVENTS BEGINNING WITH DECEMBER 1976 PLATE BASIN CONFERENCE
WHICH HAS INCREASED TENSION IN BRAZILIAN-ARGENTINE RELATIONS.
TENSIONS HAVE CENTERED ON TWO COUNTRIES INABILITY TO AGREE UPON
DEVELOPMENT OF PARANA RIVER HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS AND NAVIGA-

TION RIGHTS IN THE PLATE RIVER BASIN. BRIEF SUMMARY IN ESTADO
AUGUST 5 LISTED EPISODES IN DISCORDANT DIALOGUE OVER PAST
YEAR:

- IN DECEMBER 1976 AT PLATE BASIN MEETINGS SILVEIRA AND EX-
FOREIGN MINISTER GUZZETTI AGREED TO DISCUSSIONS ON TECHNICAL
AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION, BUT SILVEIRA POINTEDLY DECLINED TO
ENTER DIALOGUE ON PARANA RIVER HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS.

- IN JANUARY 1977 BRAZIL SENT SECOND OF TWO NOTES TO
ARGENTINA EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER GOA'S DOUBTS ABOUT THE
VALIDITY OF THE EXISTING 1856 TREATY ON PLATE RIVER NAVIGATION.

-IN MARCH ARGENTINA PROPOSED TRILATERAL TALKS WITH PARAGUAYON
PARANA RIVER PROJECTS. GOB REFUSED THE
PROPOSAL AS "TOO LEGALISTIC" AND ADDED THAT IT RAISED THESIS
UNACCEPTABLE TO BRAZILIANS OF "PREVIOUS CONSULTATION" OVER
UTILIZATION OF SHARED RESOURCES.

-IN MAY ARGENTINA COUNTERED WITH A NEW PROPOSAL
SUGGESTING PURELY TECHNICAL CONSULTATIONS, LEAVING ASIDE
JURIDICAL ISSUES. ARGENTINES' SUGGESTED FIRST STAGE
BILATERAL TALKS WITH BRAZIL, FOLLOWED BY LATER TALKS INCLUDING
PARAGUAY. BRAZIL, ACCORDING TO ESTADO, SAW PROPOSAL AS
NULLIFYING EARLIER ARGENTINE PROPOSAL REGARDING TRIPARTITE TALKS.

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-TWO DAYS AFTER ARGENTINE PROPOSAL WAS TABLED, ESTADO
CLAIMS BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR WAS CALLED TO ARGENTINE FOREIGN
MINISTRY AND ASKED TO RESPOND WITHIN 12 DAYS TO ARGENTINE PROPOSAL
FOR PARANA RIVER NEGOTIATIONS.

-IN JUNE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER AND SILVEIRA HAD EXTENDED
MEETING IN GRENADA PRESUMABLY TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE
MEANS TO SOLVE THEIR DISPUTE.

3. EXCHANGE OF NOTES PUBLISHED BY ESTADO CONFIRMS SEQUENCE
LISTED ABOVE. BRAZILIAN JULY 12 NOTE ALSO OFFERED STERN REBUKE
TO AN "UNCOMMON AND ANTI-BRAZILIAN" PRESS CAMPAIGN IN ARGENTINE
WHICH ITAMARATY CALLED A FACTOR RETARDING REOPENING OF
THE DIALOGUE. BRAZILIAN NOTE ALSO COMPLAINED ABOUT ARGENTINE
INTERPRETATION OF 1856 PLATE RIVER NAVIGATION TREATY, WHICH
IMPLIES A LINKAGE IN FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN DOWNSTREAM NAVI-
GATION AND UPSTREAM PROJECTS. BRAZIL IN EFFECT ACCEPTED
TRILATERAL TECHNICAL LEVEL TALKS OVER THE PARANA HYDROELECTRIC
PROJECTS. ARGENTINE JULY 28 REPLY ACCEPTED TECHNICAL DIALOGUE
PROPOSED BY BRAZIL AND INDICATED DELAY IN REPLYING TO EARLIER
BRAZILIAN NOTES ABOUT PLATE RIVER NAVIGATION HAD BEEN CAUSED BY
INTEMPERATE BRAZILIAN LANGUAGE. ARGENTINE NOTE WHILE

ACCEPTING TECHNICAL TALKS ALSO CALLED FOR BROAD IMAGINATIVE
GUIDELINES FOR THE TALKS INJECTING POLITICAL FLAVOR INTO
TALKS GOB WISHES TO KEEP PURELY TECHNICAL.

4. FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA TOLD PRESS AUGUST 6 THAT
PUBLICATION OF NOTES WOULD "NOT INTERRUPT, AND NOT THREATEN
THE DIALOGUE INITIATED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES."
SIMILARLY ITAMARATY SPOKESMAN LAMPREIA CALLED PUBLICATION
"A SIDE ISSUE THAT DOES NOT MODIFY THE BRAZILIAN DISPOSITION
TO DIALOGUE WITH THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT ABOUT PROBLEMS
IN THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP." LAMPREIA ALSO ABSOLVED
THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT (AND FOREIGN MINISTRY) FROM
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LETTTM INDICATING LEAK WAS AN IN-
DIVIDUAL ACT. IN AN OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE ITAMARATY
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DENIED THAT THE LEAK OCCURRED FROM THE BRAZILIAN SIDE.
IN TERMS OF A SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSE TO THE ARGENTINE
JULY 28 NOTE, LAMPREIA SAID ITAMARATY WAS STUDYING NOTE
AND WOULD AT AN OPPORTUNE MOMENT DELIVER ITS REPLY.
ESTADO AUGUST 7 INDICATED GOB WAS SEEKING CLARIFICATION
FROM ARGENTINES ABOUT ADJUSTMENTS GOA HAS IN MIND RE
1856 TREATY BEFORE IT RESPONDS TO JULY 28 NOTE.

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5. IN EDITORIAL COMMENT AUGUST 6, ESTADO APPLAUDED ITAMARATY'S EFFORTS TOWARDS RAPPROACHMENT WITH ARGENTINA AS EVIDENCED IN NOTES AND COMPLIMENTED ARMED FORCES LEADERS WHO USED THEIR GOOD OFFICES FOR "PARALLEL DIPLOMACY." (SEE PARA 6 BELOW.) ESTADO CRITICIZED SILVEIRA FOR CLOUDING BASIC ISSUES OF BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH CRITICISM IN JULY 12 NOTE OF ARGENTINE PRESS. COMMENTING FURTHER AUGUST 9, ESTADO COMPLIMENTED ARGENTINES FOR THEIR TACT AND PRUDENCE IN REPLY TO ITAMARATY'S NOTE, AND SAID IT REPRESENTED AN INTELLIGENT AND OPPORTUNE LESSON IN DIPLOMACY FOR SILVEIRA. JORNAL DO BRASIL CLAIMED AUGUST 6 THAT NOTES INDICATED THE OBSTACLES TO DIALOGUE HAD BEGUN TO BE REMOVED, DESPITE SIGNS OF DISAGREEMENT.

6. COMMENT. THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT ARGENTINE-BRAZILIAN DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGE REVIEWED IN NOTES HAS BEEN COMPLEMENTED IN RECENT MONTHS BY PARALLEL DIALOGUE BETWEEN RESPECTIVE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS. IN EARLY JULY AIR FORCE CHIEFS MET AT FOZ DO IGUAQU, AND LATER IN MONTH BRAZILIAN CNO ADMIRAL GUALTER VISITED ARGENTINA WHERE HE WAS RECEIVED BY VIDELA. ARGENTINA ADMIRAL MASSERA VISITED
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BRASILIA SHORTLY AFTER ON A VISIT GOB APPARENTLY TRIED TO KEEP FROM PRESS. EMFA CHIEF GEN. POTYGUARA HAD TOLD PRESS JULY 15 THAT THERE WERE PROBLEMS BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL, ADMITTED SERVICE CHIEFS HAD DISCUSSED THEM WITH THEIR ARGENTINE COUNTERPARTS, BUT DENIED THIS COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AS A SEPARATE MILITARY DIPLOMACY. IN WHAT ITAMARATY CONTACTS TELL US WAS AN INPRECEDENTED ACTION, SILVEIRA WAS INVITED BY MINISTER OF ARMY FROTA TO BRIEF ARMY COMMANDERS JULY 27 ON EXTERNAL SITUATION. PRESUMABLY, RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA WAS AN ITEM ON THE AGENDA.

7. ON POSITIVE SIDE BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA HAVE AGREED TO MEET AUGUST 23-25 TO DISCUSS TRUCK TRANSPORTATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 8-9 MEETING OF SOUTHERN CONE STATES ON SAME TOPIC IN BRASILIA. BRAZILIAN PRESS HAD REPORTED, INCORRECTLY ACCORDING TO SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO SILVEIRA, JOSE NOGUEIRA FILHO, IN EARLY JULY THAT ARGENTINES HAD CLOSED TUNNELS ACROSS THE ANDES TO TRUCKS BEARING CARGO BETWEEN CHILE AND BRAZIL. BRAZILIAN PRESS HAD NOTED BILATERAL GOB/GOA TRUCKING AGREEMENT WOULD TERMINATE AUGUST 31, AND THAT GOB MIGHT APPLY PRESSURE BY NEGLECTING TO NEGOTIATE A RENEWAL.
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